



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Department of the Interior Acting Secretary, Employees
Volunteer for Capital River Relief Project
Take Pride in America[®] gathers DC area employees to clean the Potomac River**

Washington, DC – April 29, 2006 – Over fifty local employees for the Department of the Interior and Acting Secretary Lynn Scarlett gathered today to volunteer in the Capital River Relief project, a large-scale clean up of the Potomac and Anacostia watersheds.

Working in three hour shifts, employees were shuttled on small, 10-passenger boats to targeted sites to collect litter and large debris from the banks of the Potomac River. This year marks the third year that Take Pride in America[®], a volunteer program within the Department of the Interior, organized the employee workday in support of this project.

“For all of us at the Department, participating in the Capital River Relief is a rewarding experience. Managing public lands may be our job, but today we were able to step outside our door and make a difference by volunteering in our own backyard,” said Scarlett. “Days like today help add value to the jobs that we do everyday.”

Take Pride in America works to encourage volunteerism on public lands through national, regional and local partnerships with civic groups, government entities, businesses and community organizations. Using a similar model, the Capital River Relief project is a coalition of community and government organizations, as well as environmental groups and businesses.

“Strategic partnerships between groups like Take Pride and Capital River Relief empower citizens with a simple message—our public lands belong to all of us, and together, we can help protect them,” said Michelle Cangelosi, executive director of Take Pride. “This is a true story of how one person, Chad Pregracke who founded Living Lands & Waters, can grow an idea from the river in his backyard into an effort that reaches river communities across the nation. I’m very proud for Take Pride to be a part of this project.”

Take Pride in America[®] is a partnership program that enables individuals, civic groups, corporations and others to volunteer in caring for the lands that we share. Our goal is to instill an active sense of ownership and responsibility in every citizen for our natural, cultural and historic resources. For more information, visit www.TakePride.gov.